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FOR

DATA ENTRY SYSTEMS WITH BIOMETRIC DEVICES

FOR SECURITY ACCESS CONTROL

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**DATA ENTRY SYSTEMS WITH BIOMETRIC DEVICES
FOR SECURITY ACCESS CONTROL**

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

1. Field of the Invention

5 The present invention relates to the field of high security locks and related security devices.

2. Prior Art

High security locks and similar security devices of various kinds are well-known in the prior art. One class of 10 such locks is keyboard or keypad operated locks wherein users of the locks are provided a code which, when entered into the keyboard, will operate the same. Such codes may be lock dependent, essentially serving as a combination for the lock, may be user dependent, essentially identifying the user to 15 the lock system, or may be a combination of lock and user dependent. An example of the first type of lock are locks controlling access to parts of a secure facility where all authorized persons have the same entry code, whereas locks of the second type include those used as part of an automatic 20 teller machine to enable function keys which allow one to withdraw money and conduct other transactions. Locks of the third type include locks controlling access to parts of a secure facility where each authorized person has a respective

unique entry code that identifies that person to the system as well as provides the desired entry. In that regard, the words lock, locks and security devices as used herein are used in a general sense to denote a means for granting access
5 to a place or enabling a function or an action which is otherwise disabled, such as the operation of a door latch, the withdrawal of funds in an automatic teller machine, or enabling any of various types of services in communication devices, computing devices, cash machines, point of sale
10 terminals, etc., or alternatively, the disabling of something which is normally enabled, such as might be required to lock or disable something normally left unlocked or enabled.

In a conventional keyboard operated lock, the level of security attained is relatively low because the number to key
15 assignments are fixed and ordered, with each key representing a specific number or numbers where such number or numbers are often permanently imprinted on or adjacent to the key, and the sequence of key depressions by a user are normally observable from either side of the user without substantial
20 difficulty. To alleviate this problem and enhance the security of the overall system, keyboards and/or keypads are known wherein the keys are not given a predetermined and ordered and fixed 1-2-3 type sequence, but rather are given unique identifications for each use of the keypad, "which
25 identifications are effectively scrambled before the next

such use". In this manner, the physical key depression sequence observed by any outside observer during one operation of the system will have no meaning during the next operation of the system when the keys are identified
5 differently, and reentry of the same physical key depression sequence by an interloper will result in the entry of a different code and thereby not result in a breach. Further, in such systems the key identifications appearing when the user is standing in front of the keyboard are highly
10 directional, and not observable from the side. Thus, the body or head of the user blocks the key identifications from view by others, so that while the physical key depressions can be observed from the side, the key identifications associated therewith cannot similarly be determined.

15 Apparatus of the foregoing type provides a high level of security, as no information concerning the code for operating the lock, which may be personal to a specific user, is conveyed to an interloper watching the sequence of key depressions used to operate the security device. However, it
20 is still possible with such systems that an interloper obtain the code through the use of force, threat, deceit, fraud, theft, or other malicious acts.

Biometric devices, including but not limited to optical biometric devices such as facial recognition, which includes

but is not necessarily limited to, iris recognition, retina recognition, etc., may be used to enhance the security of a security system. Such biometric devices may provide an additional level of security since they require the presence 5 of the person rather than simply the knowledge of a personal code that could have been obtained by way of force, threat, deceit, fraud or other malicious acts.

However, a drawback of biometric devices is that they typically require the position of a specific body part of a 10 user to be consistently placed at a precise location for user recognition. For example, some biometric devices require a binocular type of device to position the retina and/or iris, or a mirror that requires the user to position themselves at a specific distance and in a specific inclination to a camera 15 or reader for facial/iris recognition. In addition, these devices require that the user be aware of the positioning process and willingly comply in order to be recognized. Furthermore, they require time for the user to reach the proper position.

20 Thus, it would be desirable to provide a new security device that would enhance the level of security achieved individually by the hereinbefore described devices. In addition, it would be desirable for such a security system with a biometric device to provide a means by which

36491P008

information can be gathered from the user without inconveniencing the user.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Figure 1 is a face view of one exemplary embodiment of the present invention.

Figure 2 is a face view of another exemplary embodiment
5 of the present invention.

Figure 3 is a diagram illustrating a horizontal cross section of one exemplary mechanical view restrictor that may be used with the present invention.

Figure 4 is a diagram illustrating a vertical cross
10 section of the exemplary mechanical view restrictor of Figure 3.

Figure 5 is a diagram illustrating the use of the present invention as a part of a security network.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

In the description to follow, various references are made to terms such as keys, keypads and key entry. These words may be used in the most general sense, and are to be interpreted in accordance with the context in which they are used. By way of example, in some instances the keys are like a key on a keyboard or keypad such as on a telephone in the sense that they incorporate switches that are activated on pressing of the keys. In accordance with the present invention, such keys would also incorporate some form of variable key identification. In other cases a key is merely a physical location, as in a speech activated system, though again in accordance with the present invention, each such location would incorporate some form of variable key identification. Such a key is then activated, not by depressing anything, but rather by speaking the key identification. Thus a keypad or keyboard is in general merely a group of keys arranged in some physical order for viewing and in some instances, for actuation. Key entry or actuation may be by actually pressing the key, or by any other means, such as speaking the key identification associated with pre-defined locations for speech recognition purposes. For convenience, devices that might be considered such a form of keypad or keyboard will simply be referred to hereafter as keypads.

The present invention takes advantage of the fact that in certain more advanced prior art security systems, the system is or can be configured so that the person using the security system must necessarily adequately physically align themselves with the system to be able to operate the same.

By way of example, in prior art security systems wherein key identifications are scrambled, so that they vary from use to use, physical view restrictors make those identifications viewable only when the user's eyes are aligned with the system. Thus facial or eye alignment is a prerequisite for successful operation of the device. This is to be compared with prior art keypad systems wherein the keys have fixed identifications viewable from anywhere in the vicinity of the keypad. In this case, facial alignment is not necessary for operation of the keypad, and in fact, many people can operate a keypad without even looking at it.

Systems requiring facial or eye alignment to view scrambled key identifications include manually operable systems wherein keys are manually operated in accordance with a pre-assigned code or codes for that keypad or for that user, or a combination of both. Other such systems include systems wherein a spatial key position sequence is memorized and a code or codes are verbally input by the user and detected using speech recognition as the user reads a sequence of key identifications in the predetermined spatial

sequence of key positions. Such systems, too, require the alignment of the person's face with the keypad during use, as otherwise the key identifications in the spatial sequence cannot be seen.

5 Because facial (including eye) alignment of the user of such security systems is necessary for the successful use of the system, the present invention incorporates one or more biometric readers in a most unobtrusive way to enhance the level of security obtained. As shall subsequently be
10 described in greater detail, the biometric reader or readers may be incorporated in some embodiments of the invention by incorporation of one or more solid state cameras positioned to obtain the desired biometric data during use of the security system while the user of the system is appropriately
15 aligned for seeing the key identifications. In particular, in security systems of the type in which the present invention will be incorporated, such systems normally require some initial activation by the user to initiate the display. Such activation is typically, but not necessarily, initiated
20 by activation of a switch. If so, activation of the biometric reader preferably would not occur on activation of the switch, as such a switch normally can be activated without the desired facial alignment. However, upon starting of entry of the code or codes, facial alignment to within the
25 restrictions of the system is substantially assured. In that

regard, for systems that are sensitive to eye or head rotation, the view restrictor, an exemplary embodiment to be subsequently described in greater detail, may only allow viewing of all key identifications when the users head is in 5 its ordinary, un-rotated condition. Accordingly, the biometric reader or readers may be initiated during the actual entry of the code or codes, preferably early in the entry of a multiple character code, as later character entries may be by way of memory once the scrambled assignment 10 has been viewed for a few moments. Also actuation of the biometric device early in the code entry allows more time for data analysis, and data transmission for analysis at a central location in networked security systems.

Once the biometric reader has been initiated, a single 15. reading, measurement or other data may be taken and processed for correlation with pre-stored images, measurements or other data for recognition purposes. Alternatively, multiple readings or measurements may be taken and averaged before processing for recognition purposes. As a further 20 alternative implementation, multiple measurements may be individually processed and then averaged, if applicable, or the best fit or all fits may be used for identification purposes. Of course, other techniques may be used as desired.

Various types of biometric devices are well known in the art, such as devices for facial recognition. Facial recognition, as used herein, is used in the general sense, such as, by way of example, to denote recognition based on a 5 facial image, a larger image such as one including the ears, a smaller image such as may be used for recognition of one or more selected features of a persons face or head, or for retina recognition, iris recognition or to measure eye separation. In that regard, facial recognition might be by 10 way of, or include, other simple linear measurements rather than recognition of an image per se. Also, the image, feature and/or measurement used may be the same for all users, or may vary for each user based on individual distinctive features of the users.

15 Such biometric devices, in operation, generally comprise data or image acquisition, data or image analysis and comparison or correlation with prestored information for recognition purposes. The present invention, of course, is directed principally to alignment for data or image 20 acquisition purposes, as the data or image analysis, storage and comparison or correlation with predetermined information, etc. is well known, regularly improved and steadily reduced in cost by the declining costs and increased capabilities of digital data processing equipment, particularly 25 microprocessor-based equipment.

In certain embodiments of the present invention, it may be desirable to use multiple cameras for recognition of different features or characteristics of each user of the security system, to compensate for differences in the exact 5 positioning of the user, or for other purposes. By way of example, two cameras separated horizontally by an average adult eye separation might provide an image of each eye for iris recognition or retina recognition, or both at the same time, also providing image data for determination of eyeball 10 separation with a grossly reduced sensitivity to the exact distance between the cameras and the user's eyes. A typical iris recognition system is an example of a system wherein assuring the head of the user is not rotated is preferable or necessary for proper operation.

15 The present invention has various advantages over the use of a scrambled keypad alone or a biometric device alone. In particular, a scrambled keypad is as secure as the code itself, and once the code is known to an unauthorized person, unauthorized penetration of the security system is a simple 20 matter. Biometric devices, on the other hand, while overcoming this limitation, have the disadvantage that they require the user to not only be aware that the process is occurring, but to also voluntarily properly position themselves before the system acquires and begins to process 25 the relevant information. Thus, while the present invention

is quite unobtrusive, the use of biometric devices alone is in general quite intrusive. For instance, when using the present invention, if the reading of the biometric device does not provide the degree of match or correlation with 5 prestored data that is desired, a simple "please reenter your code" instruction may be issued through digitally generated speech, a display, an indicator light, or otherwise. When such an instruction is issued, the normal human response is to reenter the code with greater care, and thus typically 10 with even better facial alignment for biometric device data acquisition purposes, all of which is still very non-intrusive.

Another advantage of the present invention is that the biometric data taken during failed attempts to operate the 15 security system may be retained for later examination, or even immediately brought to someone's attention for appropriate action. This will be discussed further herein.

The word "recognition" has been used herein in a manner which may imply a positive sense. By way of example, one 20 might use some form of recognition such as facial recognition, such as iris recognition or retina recognition to identify the user of the security system as one of the authorized users in the biometric database to within the required degree of certainty, and assuming that user enters

the code associated with the user so identified, the requirements of the security system will be satisfied. Recognition, however, may also be used herein in a negative sense. By way of example, the security code entered by the 5 user might specifically identify an authorized user or one of a small group of authorized users, in which case the biometric data may be used to reject that identification as not being adequately verifiable. In such an embodiment, the biometric data may be processed as required during data 10 entry, but the ultimate comparison or correlation would wait for code entry to be completed, as only comparison or correlation with the data for the individual or small group of individuals identified by the code itself need be made. That ultimate comparison or correlation, therefore, is to 15 reject users that cannot be verified within acceptable limits as being who they purport to be.

Stated differently, processing of the security code prior to use of the biometric data permits the system to operate only to verify that the biometric data matches that 20 of the user whose code was entered. This is a far simpler task than to do a search through an entire biometric database for a match to the input biometric data. Thus, the use of the combination of a code entry and biometric data in this manner dramatically reduces the processing power and

processing time required by the system and potentially allows significantly cheaper and simpler hardware implementations.

Now referring to Figure 1, an exemplary keypad, generally indicated by the numeral 20, in accordance with an exemplary embodiment of the present invention may be seen. The keypad 20 in this embodiment comprises 10 keys 22, arranged much like a telephone keypad. The scrambled numbering shown illustrates an exemplary scrambling of key identifications, preferably made viewable only by the user, and then only when the user's eyes, and thus face, are appropriately aligned horizontally and vertically with respect to and properly spaced from the keypad.

Also visible in Figure 1 is a small solid-state camera 24, positioned to get a repeatable view of the user's face when the user is aligned for viewing of the randomized key identifications. The keypad itself might have a start switch or be activated on depression of any of the switches on the keypad or be activated by the sensing of the proximity of an individual or a hand or by other means, with the camera 24 preferably being activated for its recognition function as the user begins entry of the code. The camera 24, of course, should be positioned to get a view of the user's features to be recognized without obstruction of the user's hand. Accordingly, Figure 1 should be considered schematic only, as

the camera might be positioned somewhat higher to better avoid the possibility of such obstruction.

Figure 2 shows an embodiment similar to Figure 1, though with certain variations. While the scrambled key 5 identification is again shown as a scrambling of the numbers 0 through 9, other characters such as alpha characters, or even images or outlines of objects selected for ease in distinguishing therebetween using speech recognition techniques could be scrambled and displayed. In any event, 10 the embodiment illustrated in Figure 2 is intended for speech recognition of the various characters displayed as spoken by a user of the security system in accordance with a pre-memorized spatial key sequence. For this purpose, a microphone 26 is provided. In this embodiment, two cameras 15 28 separated by an average adult eye separation provide for retina recognition, iris recognition, eyeball separation measurement, etc. Also in this embodiment, the keypad, generally indicated by the numeral 20, is supported on a frame or housing 30, and is rotatable about a horizontal axis 20 32 to accommodate users of a different height. This may be an important convenience, as the keypad should be relatively easily viewed by persons under 5 feet tall to persons approaching 7 feet tall, and the characters preferably are quite limited in viewing angles, preferably both in a 25 horizontal and in a vertical direction. In that regard,

while security devices are usually armored, the keypad itself need not be, as access to the internal workings of the keypad or to the electrical connections to the housing doesn't help facilitate unauthorized operation of the device. As a
5 further level of security, an angle sensor could be incorporated to sense the angle of the keypad during use as an indication of how tall the user is. Such an indication may have limits in accuracy (a woman in high heals one day, and not another day), but could provide a rough indication
10 for elimination of obvious mismatches.

The view restrictor or restrictors may take various forms ranging from mechanical baffles to more sophisticated lensing or lens arrays, holographic displays, etc. An exemplary baffle 34 is schematically shown in Figures 3 and
15 4, respectively. Figure 3 is a view taken in a horizontal plane showing a person's two eyes viewing individual character displays 38 behind the restrictor, and Figure 4 is a similar view taken in a vertical plane. Note that in Figure 3, the key identifications from the center to the left
20 are viewable by one eye and the key identifications from the center to the right are viewable by the other eye. Consequently the user cannot see all key identifications at the same time unless the user's two eyes are aligned vertically (both eyes in the same horizontal plane, i.e.,
25 head is not rotated), as otherwise the vertical restriction

of Figure 4 will not allow both eyes to see all key identifications at the same time. Such a view restrictor can also generally function properly for persons that are effectively blind in one eye, as such users will

5 automatically rock their head back and forth to see all key identifications, rather than moving their entire body.

Therefore, since systems such as iris recognition systems are not sensitive to eye rotation so long as the angle of rotation is the same each time, repeatable data may be

10 obtained as long as the image acquisition is triggered when such a user is always responding to a key identification at the same side of the keypad.

Such a restrictor could simply be a molded black plastic piece with a matt black finish. The keypad could be

15 comprised of seven segment light emitting diode displays 38 behind the view restrictor 34 with a clear plastic plate 40 and a plastic membrane keypad 42 thereover. This, of course, is exemplary only, as many other keypad structures, including but not limited to those having lighted key identifications

20 thereunder, are well known in the prior art. Also with respect to the view restrictor, as stated before, other types of view restrictors may also be used, including mechanical restrictors having an increased number of baffles for further view restriction. Also, while more sophisticated view

25 restrictors may be used, in at least many instances,

relatively simple mechanical view restrictors should be adequate to cause the user to sufficiently accurately locate himself with respect to the keypad, and thus with respect to the camera, for most recognition technologies. In that 5 regard, the view restrictor or restrictors, whatever may be used, need only be as good or effective as required for the proper operation of the recognition technology being used, as excessive alignment requirements again become intrusive.

Even if the view restrictor allows one eye to see all 10 the keys, there is a natural tendency to want to see stereoscopically, so if the only way to get a clean stereo view is to have both eyes in the same horizontal plane, that would tend to encourage alignment as well. A restrictor is still beneficial, however, to prevent one from viewing the 15 keypad from the side.

The systems hereinbefore specifically disclosed have included optical systems using one or more solid state cameras for image or data acquisition. Such optical systems may operate on visible light, or invisible light such as 20 infrared light. Also other biometric sensors requiring some facial alignment may be used instead of or in addition to cameras, such as, by way of one example, a sonar type of sensor. Such a sensor might comprise a small phased array of sound transmitter/receivers invisibly incorporated on the

face panel of the keypad and used to sweep a user's face for "image" or data acquisition purposes. Operating on a frequency above the audio range would make the biometric device operation undetectable, yet provide information in the 5 third dimension (nose length, the depth of the eyes) or image data (cheek and forehead contours, etc.) that would be particularly difficult to somehow synthesize.

The present invention may be used as part of a standalone system though is more commonly and efficiently 10 used as part of a security system network (see Figure 5), wherein a plurality of keypads in accordance with the present invention controlling access (locks), enabling operation of equipment, etc., are coupled through a network such as a local area network to a computer 44. The computer, located 15 in a secure location, stores predetermined data, processes images or other data received from each keypad, compares or correlates that data with prestored data, and provides information back to the keypad accepting or rejecting the attempted user identification. The computer also controls 20 the enabling of whatever is controlled by the security system, frequently, but not always, through separate communication lines, not shown. Since the present invention may incorporate one or more cameras and image data storage and transmission capabilities, the system may include the 25 ability to transmit and permanently store a facial image of

the user, either each time the system is used, or alternatively, at least each time an attempted user identification is rejected. That image may be displayed on a display 46 in real-time or in a later viewing.

5 In the claims that follow, the words data and digital data are used in the general sense to include, but not be limited to, two dimensional image data, visible or not, three dimensional image and/or contour data, and non-image data such as linear dimensions (eye to eye, length of nose, etc.),
10 color (such as color of hair), or other characteristics or parameters.

In the foregoing specification, the invention has been described with reference to specific embodiments thereof. It will be evident however, that various modifications and
15 changes may be made thereto without departing from the broader spirit and scope of the invention. The specification and drawings are, accordingly, to be regarded in an illustrative rather than a restrictive sense.